

Faith-Based Approaches to Environmental Stewardship: Community Examples and Governments' Role

Dr. Susan Emmerich, Consultant

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Dr. Susan Emmerich

Palos Heights, Illinois

- Advocate of community-based and faith-based environmental stewardship and sustainability.
- Chief Executive Officer of Emmerich Environmental Consultants.
- Former professor of Environmental Science at Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, Illinois
- Former U.S. Department of State representative to the United Nations on environmental affairs.
- 20 years of experience in her field in the private, academic, local and federal sectors.
- Within the federal sector, she worked for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Departments of State and Interior, and the the Senate Foreign Relations committee and the World Bank.
- Author and film producer of the Telly and Aurora Award winning films on the Tangier Watermen's Stewardship Initiative.
- Founder and former director of the Tangier Watermen's Stewardship for the Chesapeake, a non-profit organization.

Charles Lee

Washington DC

- Associate Director for Policy and Interagency Liaison at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Environmental Justice.
- The Designated Federal Official for the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, which recently concluded a major report, “Ensuring Risk Reduction in Communities with Multiple Stressors: Environmental Justice and Cumulative Risks/Impacts.”
- More than 30 years of experience in research, advocacy and direct service around environmental health and social justice concerns of people of color and low-income communities.
- Pioneered the field of environmental justice. Architect of the two landmark seminal national events in emergence of the environmental justice field:
 - The seminal 1987 report, *Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States*;
 - The historic 1991 National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit.
- Spearheaded numerous milestones marking the emergence of federal policy in this area, including development and implementation of Executive Order 12898.
- Chairs the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG)
- Spearheaded development of environmental justice demonstration projects which laid groundwork for emergence of an environmental justice collaborative problem-solving model.
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- Former member of the EPA National Environmental Justice Advisory Council and the Institute of Medicine Committee on Environmental Justice: Research, Education and Health Policy Needs.
- Editor and Writer of articles, including:
 - “Environmental Justice: Building a Unified Vision of Health and the Environment,” in *Environmental Health Perspectives* (NIEHS, April 2002)
 - “Collaborative Models to Achieve Environmental Justice and Healthy Communities,” in *Power, Justice and the Environment: A Critical Appraisal of the Environmental Justice Movement* (MIT Press, 2005), and
 - “Environmental Justice,” *Environmental Health: From Global to Local* (Jossey-Bass, 2005).

David F. Kern

Little Rock, Arkansas

- **Outreach Coordinator, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), Air Division, Asbestos and Lead-Based Paint Branch.**
- **Former ADEQ spokesman and Legal Division Office Administrator.**
- **Former journalist with more than 20 years' experience, including assignments as an environmental writer, investigative reporter and state house correspondent.**
- **Master of Urban Studies degree from the University of Chicago and a Bachelor of Arts in journalism from Marquette University.**
- **Coordinated, presented and moderated presentations at national and regional journalism conferences.**
- **EPA National Community Involvement Conference :**
 - **2005 Planning Committee**
 - **2006 Keynote and Selection committees.**

Presentation Outline:

(two and one-half hours)

- Introduction to topic
- Audience Input : What audience members hope to get out of this workshop.
- Introduction to Video Clips regarding three examples of a faith-based approach to environmental stewardship:
 - Chesapeake Bay
 - Pennsylvania farm community
 - New Berlin, Maryland, urban development.
- Video Clips
- Comment on video clips: How a faith-based approach can achieve environmental results from a local issue or project.
- EPA activities relating to faith institutions and communities.
- Review of a faith-based approach at Arkansas facilities.
- Panelists address: How state and federal regulators can work with groups using a faith-based approach.
- Discussion among panelists
- Panelists' summary
- Audience Questions



Faith-Based Approach

- **Clarity in our definition**
- **White House faith-based initiative**
 - **Religious non-profits on par with secular non-profits**
 - **Federal money distributed**
 - **Federal strings attached**
 - **To improve welfare of citizens**

Faith-Based Approach

- Faith-based approach in this presentation
 - Different, unrelated to White House initiative
 - A faith-based stewardship approach
 - Based on a faith worldview

Faith-Based Approach

- **Regulators, Government**
 - **Their support sought for faith-based organizations, non-profits, other groups**
 - **Not expected to use faith-based approach**
But to support it

Faith-Based Approach

- **A worldview**
 - **Determines our values**
 - **Vision of and for life**
 - **Community, collective view**

Faith-Based Approach

- Based on the Christian faith
- Its standard of authority – the Bible
- Faith worldview → a faith-based approach

Faith-Based Approach

- One of several motivations
 - For environmental decision-making
 - Faith-based approach
 - Environmental justice
 - Economic Interest
 - Protection of Health
 - Maintenance of quality of life
 - Resistance to change

Presentation Goals

- Provide insight to regulators, community leaders
- Discussion of key issues, opportunities
- Engage audience members
- Dialogue: ways to support faith-based stewardship

Faith-Based Approach

What do you hope to get out of this talk?
Voice your ideas to moderator.

Faith-Based Approaches

In this presentation

- **Consultant's view:**
A faith-based approach
to environmental stewardship
- **EPA representative's view:**
Environmental stewardship
in faith communities

A Faith-Based Approach to Community-Led Stewardship:

Lessons From Three Chesapeake Bay Watershed Communities

Dr. Susan Emmerich

Emmerich Environmental Consulting

Methodology

- **Project Objective:**
 - **Worldview Concept**
 - **Work within faith worldview to change attitudes toward environment, environmental professionals and economy.**

Project Design

➤ Ethnography – Findings

- Impt. Role of church and women
- Biblical Environmental Ethic existed in community worldview

➤ Action Research - Approach

Goal and Challenges

- **Common Goal: Environmental stewardship and economic development.**
- **Challenges:**
 - **Elucidate biblical worldview related to environment, economy and neighbors**
 - **Enable watermen and farmers to recognize inconsistency**

More Challenges

- Awaken from malaise
- Relate faith, environment and race – Berlin Case
- Inspire action
- Establish organizational means to implement change

Approaches Frame Stewardship Effort

- **Change Agent and Stakeholders Together Involved in Generating Solutions**
- **Unique Approach to Education**
- **Multifaceted Role of Change Agents**
 - Paraclete
 - Peacemaker
 - Educator
 - Advocate

Faith-Based Stewardship Efforts: The Stories

- **Tangier and Clearville: Organizing and Mobilizing Community**
 - **Faith-Based Education: Basis - Bridging Faith, Science and Policy**
 - **Faith-Based Structure and Process**
 - **Women Organize and FAIITH Formed**
 - **Western PA Conserv. project**

The Stories

- **Pulpit Messages**
- **Multifaceted education effort led by Stewardship Leaders, Pastors, and or layman.**
- **Stewardship Covenants and Commitments**

The Story: Transformational Change

➤ Shifts in worldview among watermen and farmers.

- Toward land, island and Ches. Bay
- Toward Environmental Professionals
- Toward Economic issues
- Toward Political Participation

The Story:

Transformational Change

- Shifts in worldview among Environmentalists from Ches. Bay Foundation and government officials
 - Work within faith-based worldview
 - Work collegially from other's perspective
 - Need different communication approaches
 - Need outside and inside change agents

Role of Govt. and Non-Govt'l Entities

➤ Tangier Case

- Participation in final Stewardship conference
- Invited Tangier rep's to federal Ches. Bay meetings to speak views
- Moral Support for leaders
- Financial support (non-profits and foundations)

Role of Govt. and Non-govt'l entities

➤ Clearville, PA Farmer Case

- No Federal or state involvement
- Western PA Conservancy involvement:
Provided venue, funding and change agent
- TaSC – Tangier Watermen's Stewardship for Chesapeake provided educational outreach, and materials and hosted farmers on island.

Role of Govt. and Non-Govt'l Entities in Berlin, MD Case

- **MD Coastal Bays Program (MCBP) (non-profit) led organizational effort and funded start-up of project.**
- **Project is part of larger MCBP Policy's Minority Outreach Strategy and Involvement Plan.**

Berlin Case Cont.

- EPA, NAACP, Blacks of the Chesapeake, MD DNR, U of MD-Eastern Shore rep's involved in Minority Outreach Steering Committee and meetings with local African-American church and lay leaders in Berlin.
- Change Agents (consultants)
- Bridging faith, environment, economic development, policy and race

Application to other communities

➤ Four components taken into account:

1. Culture's worldview, faith commitments and ethical principles related to env., economic stewardship and neighborliness
2. Institutional authority of culture's faith
3. Standards of authority for the culture's faith
4. Similarity of change agent (s) worldview to culture's worldview

Summary Points

- Environmental professionals should take account of community worldviews
- Faith-based worldviews can govern attitudes and conduct toward environment, economy, neighbors and political participation

Summary Points

- Faith-based worldviews can be a motivator rather than a cultural barrier
- A Faith-based Stewardship Approach can change attitudes and conduct toward environment and sustainable development.

Summary Points

- **Government can be supportive of faith-based efforts without compromising church/state line by:**
 - **Financially supporting non-profits faith-based efforts**
 - **Providing educational materials and contacts**
 - **Providing moral support.**

Supporting Environmental Stewardship in Faith Communities

Charles Lee

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

EVERYDAY CHOICES:
OPPORTUNITIES FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Report to Stephen L. Johnson
Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

EPA Innovation Action Council
November 2005

With Preface by the Administrator
December 2005

Spring 2005 -
Administrator Steve
Johnson asked EPA
Innovation Action Council
to define “environmental
stewardship” and develop
a new strategy

January 2006 – report released: *“Everyday Choices:
Opportunities for Environmental Stewardship”*

<http://epa.gov/innovation/>

"We define stewardship as the responsibility for environmental quality shared by all those whose actions affect the environment."

Stewardship Report to the Administrator,
January 2006

Administrator Johnson's Preface to Report

Stewardship:

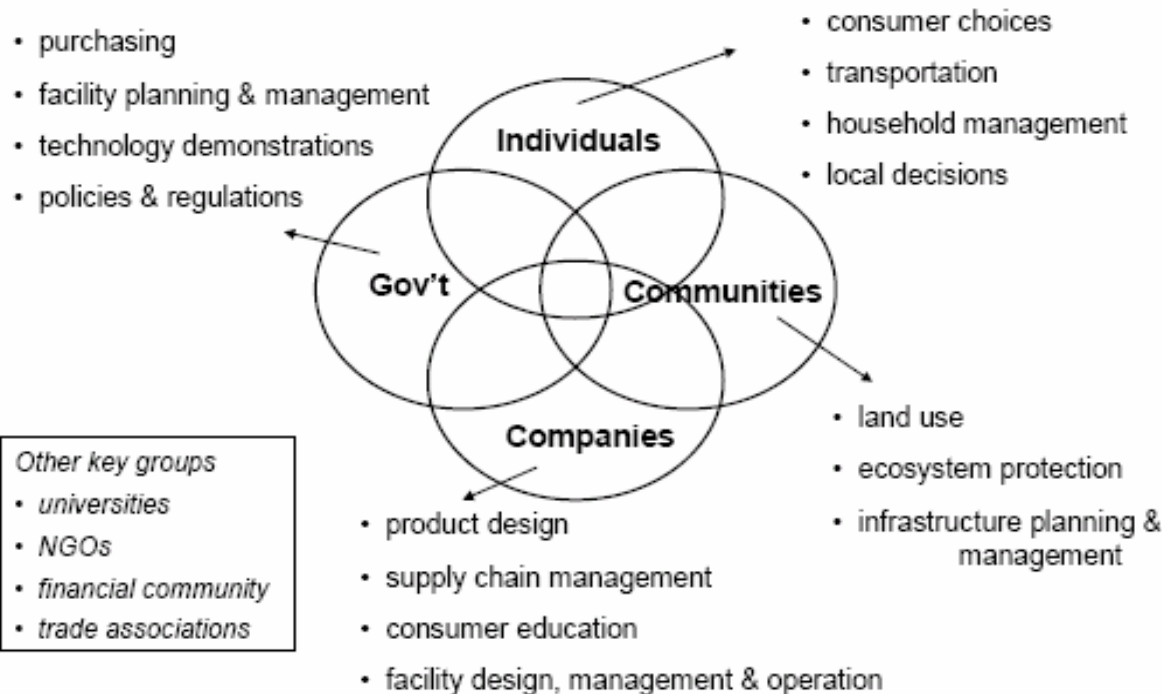
"...the next step in a ongoing evolution of policy goals, from pollution control to pollution prevention and sustainability."

Stewardship includes:

"...a growing number of programs that incorporate partnerships, market incentives, recognition and leadership awards, pollution prevention, environmental education, research, technical assistance, information and collaborative problem solving."

The “Stewardship Report” analyzes the roles of many environmental stakeholders

Proposed approach: Target key groups and their stewardship roles



Stewardship Technical Report, January 2006

A Strategy for Community Stakeholders:

"Support local institutions that can design environmental stewardship strategies with community involvement."

"...consider ways to engage a variety of partners, including neighborhoods, schools, ***religious congregations***, and environmental organizations..."

Stewardship Report to the Administrator,
January 2006

Faith organizations are important community stakeholders

"Environmental stewardship...has deep and diverse roots in our country. From farming to hunting, and conservation practices to *spiritual beliefs*, one can find an appreciation for natural resources and the valuable services they provide in many diverse settings."

"Many organizations – from the World Business Council for Sustainable Development...to the *National Religious Partnership for the Environment* – recognize the value of environmental stewardship in achieving sustainable results."

Stewardship Report to the Administrator,
January 2006

Building on “Stewardship Report”

- EPA collaborates with a wide variety of community stakeholders
- Faith congregations are an integral part of the overall community
- Virtually all faiths teach stewardship of the earth and concern for human health

Building on “Stewardship Report”

- EPA can enhance its outreach to faith congregations
- Influential faith sector can provide valuable support for EPA’s mission
- EPA’s primary purpose is to provide information, tools, and technical support as requested

Programs of likely interest to faith community

- Office of the Administrator
 - Children's Health Protection, OCHP
 - Aging Initiative, OCHP
 - Environmental Education and Training Partnership, OEE
 - Cooperative Conservation, OPEI
 - Environmental Stewardship Initiative, OPEI

Programs of likely interest to faith community

- Office of Air and Radiation
 - ENERGY STAR Congregations Network
 - Green Power Partnerships
 - CARE Partners Program
 - Indoor Air Quality
 - Tools for Schools

Programs of likely interest to faith community

- Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance
 - Environmental Justice

Programs of likely interest to faith community

- Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances
 - Green Suppliers Network
 - Biopesticides and Pollution Prevention Division

Programs of likely interest to faith community

- Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response
 - Hispanic Outreach Initiative
 - Chemicals In Your Community

Programs of likely interest to faith community

- Office of Water
 - Watersheds
 - Coastal Management
 - Community Involvement Training

Examples of faith communities interaction with EPA

- Warren County, North Carolina
- Bethel New Life (Chicago, Illinois)
- ENERGY STAR Congregations Network
 - www.energystar.gov/congregations

Next steps...

- Summer 2006

EPA Office of Public Liaison hosts internal discussions with existing programs

- Summer-Fall 2006

Meetings with external interfaith, ecumenical organizations to gauge needs and interests

- Winter 2006-07

Implement improvements in outreach of programs appropriate to faith community